THE OUTLYING SECTIONS: TIBET

Tibet is a vast plateau, probably between seven hundred thousand and a million square miles in extent, a large proportion of it—possibly half—over fifteen thousand feet in height. It is thus the most extensive region of such an elevation on the planet. Tibet is a land of rounded hills and great plains, presumably the result of long erosion in an earlier geological era. It contains many lakes, the chief of them being the Kokonor, with a surface of probably something less than two thousand square miles. Numbers of the lakes are salt, and most of them show marked signs of shrinkage. The rainfall apparently was once much greater than now—although this is disputed. On the northern borders of Tibet rise the K'un Lun and the connecting Altyn Tagh and Nan Shan ranges, some of whose peaks soar to heights of twenty thousand feet or more and are crowned by snow fields and glaciers. They form the natural boundary between Tibet and Kansu and the New Dominion. To the south of Tibet rise the Himalayas, the loftiest mountain range on the earth, and, geologically speaking, comparatively young. In deep canyons to the north of the Himalayas and in the eastern portions of Tibet flow the upper waters of the chief rivers of Northern India, Burma, Siam, Indo-China, and China. High mountains border the Tibetan plateau on the east, separating that region from China proper, notably from Szechwan. Politically, the portions of Tibet next to India are now virtually independent of China, and along the borders of China, in the new provinces (formerly the special administrative districts) of Kokonor (or Ch'ing Hai) and Hsi K'ang, largely carved out of what was once Tibet, Chinese

authority is in many places very shadowy.

THE OUTLYING SECTIONS*. THE NEW DOMINION

The New Dominion (Sinkiang), so called because it was the last of the major outlying districts to be brought into the Manchu Empire, but also known as Chinese or Eastern Turkestan, in average elevation is decidedly lower than Tibet. In contrast with the high plateau to the south, much of it seems to the traveller a great depression in the earth's crust. One oasis, indeed, Turfan, is slightly below the level of the sea. The New Dominion is made